

Lincoln, Sarah Bush Johnston

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Step mother - Sarah Lindsay  
Folder 2



# Thomas Lincoln Family

Sarah Bush Johnston  
Lincoln

Folder 2

Excerpts from newspapers and other  
sources

From the files of the  
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

# MEMOIRS of "UNCLE JOE" CANNON

RAYS HARBOR DAILY WASHINGTONIAN

By JOSEPH G. CANNON

(As told to L. White Busbey)

Hoquiam, Wash., Sunday Morning, September 25, 1927.

**Tippecanoe and Tyler, Too, first political battle-cry Cannon could remember.—Heard and sang it as his father's covered wagon passed from North Carolina to Indiana.—This was battle-cry of Log Cabin and Hard Cider campaign.—How this campaign got its name from wine of the country.**

"IF the copperheads had fought openly one might have had some respect for them," says Uncle Joe Cannon, "but their attacks were always made under cover, they lurked in the dark and when they could not strike at Lincoln directly they sought to wound him in other ways. The lengths to which they went in trying to bring the President's name into disrepute you can guess from the story I am going to tell you now."

"The relations between Lincoln and his stepmother were of the most unusual character. He was nine years old when his father married for the second time, and love and affection for him a mother has for the child whom she has brought into the world. She was his mother, in all except the accident of birth. She nursed and cared for him! she soothed and encouraged him. A woman of strong qualities, she had much to do in forming Lincoln and making him what he was. He had for her the most tender respect and veneration. It was this woman who was always first in his thoughts."

"Mrs. Lincoln was honored by her neighbors and the loyal people of the State not only as the mother of the President (and nearly everyone regarded her as such and forgot that she was a stepmother) but also because of her own exemplary life. She was a 'good neighbor', as folks say in a small community, kind, charitable, always willing to help when help was needed. None of us dreamed she was in danger of an attack or that she would be used as the means to wound her beloved son."

## Charged With Theft

"One day while I was State Attorney I received an urgent and secret summons to Charleston. There I found the judge and clerk of the court greatly agitated. They laid before me a charge of theft that had been made against Mrs. Lincoln. I was appalled. I said the thing was impossible; that a woman whose whole life had been so irreproachable could not steal. They told me she had confessed. How could I prosecute the aged woman who stood in the relation of mother to the President of the United

States? I flatly told the judge I would do nothing of the kind. I was sure it was just another phase of the copperhead war and she was the victim of conspiracy."

"I went right out to the little farm where Mrs. Lincoln lived to get the facts. As might have been expected I found her very nervous, but I asked her to tell me just what had happened. She had been in the village store, she explained, and looking over some calicoes had taken a small piece home with her to see if it matched some goods she had purchased before."

"Other women often did the same thing and no one ever accused them of stealing. But Mrs. Lincoln had been seen putting this little piece of calico in her pocket and going out of the store without paying for it, and the copperheads saw their chance and had her arrested for shoplifting. The property was worth only a few cents, but she was too conscientious and I imagine too proud to offer excuses; and I have no doubt she thought of the disgrace she was bringing to Honest Abe in the White House."

"There was I, the State's Attorney, commissioned to prosecute all offenders against the law, facing the woman who had confessed having taken property without paying for it. I did not

hesitate. I told her she had done nothing wrong and had nothing to fear. I went back to the judge, told him all the circumstances and said if we prosecuted Mrs. Lincoln we should be joining in a conspiracy to injure the president; and I proposed to him that as men, and not officers of the court, we engage in a little conspiracy of our own."

"On our own responsibility, we decided to wipe the charge and the confession off the records, and at the same time we sent for the complainants and forcibly expressed to them our disgust at their conduct and the contempt in which we held them; and warned them if they gave any publicity to the affair the consequences would be unpleasant. In short, we threw, if not the fear of the Lord at least the fear of the Law, into them, and they were duly scared and considered it advisable to keep quiet rather than risk running up against the wrath of the Judge and the State's Attorney."

"I suppose what we did was quite illegal and, had the facts become known, rendered us liable to impeachment and dismissal from office, if not worse, but do you know I have never regretted the part I took in the conspiracy. There are times when a judicial officer may take some liberties with the strict letter of the law in the interest of justice, and certainly this was the time; when we either had to prosecute an innocent woman who had not consciously done any wrong but was the victim of men contemptible enough to strike the President through his mother, or help the success of a vile conspiracy."

"I have run into some mean conspiracies in my life but nothing more infamous than this, and I like to think we administered justice with common sense. Lincoln never knew of the near arrest of his mother. It is curious

that in all the biographies and histories and stories told of Lincoln this incident has never been related and I think it is the first time it has appeared in print. I tell it now simply that you may know what Lincoln had to contend with and the desperate and despicable methods of his opponents."

## Old Political Battle Cries

We had been talking about campaign slogans, and it moved Uncle Joe to say:

"Tippecanoe and Tyler, Too is the first political battle cry I can remember. It tripped lightly on the tongue and even a child could shout it without knowing its meaning. I heard and sang it as our covered wagon passed along the highways on the trek from North Carolina to Indiana when I was four years old. As we emigrants traveled slowly over the prairies we came in contact with the most remarkable political demonstrations that have ever been seen in this country."

"It was the famous campaign of 1840, which took its place in history as the Log Cabin and Hard Cider Campaign. The whig Candidate, General Harrison, was the idol of the west, especially of Ohio and Indiana, where he had been Governor of Indiana territory, Representative and Senator from Ohio, and where he had defeated the British Indians in 1811 at the battle of Tippecanoe. He was the great Commoner to the people of that section, while President Van Buren appeared to them as the representative of aristocracy. Those Western Whigs believed that President Van Buren was in league with Europe and drank only French champagne and lived in luxury typical of the East and foreign to the necessities and the ideals of the West, where log cabins were the houses of the people and hard cider the popular beverage for merry making, and it had almost as much kick as the President's champagne."

over



### Hard Cider Wine of Country

"Oh, yes, they had whisky which they made from their corn, but hard cider was the 'wine of the country' and as closely associated with the log cabin as corn pone and wild game for food. As our little emigration train moved into the west it met this Whig enthusiasm for General Harrison, which took new and strange shape with processions of log cabins on wagons surrounded with all the trappings of the frontier, rifles and coon skins at the doors, and cider barrels with young women serving hard cider to old and young without a prophecy of the eighteenth amendment, and the Volstead Law. Quaker that I was, I learned and was permitted to sing:

Should good old cider be despised,  
And ne'er regarded more?  
Should plain log cabins be despised,  
Our fathers built of yore?

Come, ye, whatever betide her,  
To freedom have sworn to be true,  
Prime up with a cup of hard cider,  
And drink to Old Tippecanoe.

"Strict temperance people as those Quakers were and very serious in their views of life, they caught the infection of this Western political enthusiasm and soon became a part of it as they emerged from the South into the Northwest across the Ohio River at Marietta.

"For many years this was the first land mark of my recollections. It appeared to me that I had my beginning on the Old National Pike in the hurly burly of the Log Cabin and Hard Cider campaign. When our emigrant train left Greensboro it was made up of fifteen Quaker families from Guilford County, but as it moved north into Virginia other Quaker families joined until we had quite

a respectable number. With a few State roads and none of them macadamized the natural movement was to the North to some point on the National Road. It was the great connecting link between the East and the West, projected to hold the Mississippi Valley and the country beyond in the Union. There were no railroads in the West, not even to Pittsburgh, and the National Pike was the great highway along which the emigrant traveled as did government agents, the mails and the stage coaches.

### National Pike Was Highway

That National Pike in 1846 was at that time the most crowded thoroughfare in the country, with more life as compared to the country than the great White Way in New York now, and more typical Americanism than any place I know of at the present time. There was brought together the East and the West, the North and the South, and they all recognized that the National Pike was the common highway of the Nation, the common meeting place of the people regardless of section, class or condition.

"There were Senators, Representatives, Governors and Judges, prominent business men and Lawyers, traveling in gayly painted coaches drawn by fine horses with handsome trappings as for a country fair; and they traveled rapidly over the smooth highway with the drivers cracking whips and blowing horns as they approached the stage stations. There were also big Conastoga freight wagons with six horses driven with the single rein on the leaders, the driver astride the near wheel horse.

### Express Riders Picturesque

"There were mail coaches and dispatch riders of the Pony Express. The express riders excited my envy as they rode at full gallop and at the stage stations sprang from the saddle of one horse to that of another and continued their galloping. The news of the world was carried by those boys, and then and there I determined that I would be a dispatch rider of the Pony Express and ride from St. Louis with dispatches for the President of the United States. Such was my first dream of going to Washington. But few boyish dreams are realized, and years later I entered the capitol as a mere Congressman and came by the railroad which had superseded the Old National Pike as the highway of travel.

"In after years I read about the glories of the Appian Way along which the Roman Emperors trav-

eled in state, but that most celebrated highway of history seemed to me insignificant as compared with the National Pike as it appeared to a boy in 1846. The Appian Way was twenty feet wide, but the National Pike was sixty feet; wide enough to permit eight coaches to move abreast, to let the private coach of Senator Thomas H. Benton going home to St. Louis, the regular passenger coach filled with travelers from England and New England touring the West, the mail coach, the

Conastoga freighter, the 'movers' in their covered wagons, and the dispatch riders travel side by side; and still leave room for the emigrant trains and droves of cattle or even slaves without anybody being compelled to turn out to give the more aristocratic or faster travelers the right of way. There was room for all, there was good cheer, hospitality, true democracy and a free life. Henry W. Grady of Georgia long years afterward suggested that the marriage of the Puritan and the Cavalier took place in Illinois. That may be true, but the courtship certainly began on the old National Pike.

### What Old Taverns Were Like

"There were many taverns—not inns or hotels—but big taverns along the Old Pike for the accommodation of man and beast. They were located not more than ten or twelve miles apart and they were centres of hospitality, from the big stable yard at night filled with stages and freighters, their horses and drivers, to the cheerful tap room, the most popular place in the tavern, where whisky was sold for three cents a glass without any exhibition of drunkenness, for whisky was as common as cider in the West in those days and many of the taverns were required by their licenses to keep whisky as a necessary part of the accommodations for the traveling public. A Volstead law in 1840 would have produced another Whiskey Rebellion.

"Just beyond where our Quaker Colony halted in Indiana lay the big prairies of Illinois with mil-

lions of acres ready for the plow, but the settlers sought the timber, even those who went on into the frontier following the timber line into southern Illinois and Missouri. It is said that when Thomas Jefferson stood on the border of the prairies he gravely predicted they would not be settled in a thousand years. The early settlers of the West held to that view and sought homes in the timber, slaved for years clearing the land to make room to

looked like a great sea on which no one dare venture except to hunt prairie chickens. They were land hungry, perhaps an instinct handed down from our progenitors who lived in trees, Mr. Bryan to the contrary notwithstanding.

### Why People Sought Timber

"Indiana was a state in 1840 and so were Illinois and Missouri, but the settlements were all along the rivers and in the timber belt. The prairies were given over to wild game. True, the prairies were wet and regarded as swamp land, but that was not the main reason they were slow in settlement. The people sought the timber belts because they had never known any other way of

(Cannon Cont.)  
making a farm but by hewing it out of the woods. No one dreamed in 1840 that the great prairies of Illinois would within half a century become the granary of the world and also produce more warmth and power from the coal that lay under the rich black soil than any other state in the Union.

"The North Carolina Quakers stopped in the timber belt along the Wabash River, built their frontier settlement and spent years in preparing the land for the plow. They soon realized that they had made a great sacrifice in giving up their homes in North Carolina to carry out the principles of their faith, but they did not complain or weaken. They made their new settlement in the woods and put behind them the comforts of the past, believing it was according to the Divine Plan, and I think it was."

I wrote this out at the time Mr. Cannon said it. Many years later he looked over what I had written and added a postscript to this early chapter of his life by saying:

#### Retraveling the Pike

"After the close of the long session of Congress, in 1922, with railroad strikes tying up transportation, I concluded again to trek to the West along the old National Pike. As we whirled over a splendid road in a big touring car I confessed my disappointment. It was not the picturesque highway of 1840 and the scenes held in memory could not be reproduced. The wide sweep of the road with its green swards bordering it and the big sycamore trees that shaded it were gone, as were the turreted culverts which then rose like castles at every stream. The taverns had disappeared and with them the tap rooms and their hospitality.

"A garage is more serviceable than a stable yard now, but not so quaint. The land owners had encroached on the right of way, building their fences up to the pavement, destroying some of the impression of roominess and opportunity for resting by the side of the road to watch the panorama of travel as it moved in opposite directions—one of the most pleasant diversions of man.

"I do not complain, but first impressions of the National Pike do not harmonize with present day realities of a flying trip from Washington to Danville, in an automobile. I got more fun out

of the slow movements of an emigrant train which traveled four months along the way than I did in making the same journey by automobile in four days. The old Pike is for quick travel now and drove nine hundred miles without seeing much save other automobiles whizzing by in the opposite direction; like most automobilists we did not permit anyone to pass us going the same way.

"I was told that I met old friends on the Pike, but who could recognize friend or enemy in this mode of travel of touch and go? I am under the impression that I saw more people in a mile in 1840 than I did in one hundred miles in 1922, and my father had time to stop and talk and get acquainted with hundreds of people in 1840 where I could not stop for anything but to take in gas for the machine instead of for myself. I like to retain the pictures of the National Pike in 1840 so they were more national than those along the road today, more democratic and more cosmopolitan."

*The* **HIGBEE** *Company*

PUBLIC SQUARE

CLEVELAND 13, OHIO

EXECUTIVE OFFICES

CHERRY 4600

June 30th, 1951

Dr. Louis A. Warren, Director  
The Lincoln National Life Foundation  
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Dr. Warren:

When I had the pleasure of entertaining you at my home here in Cleveland, you requested a photographic copy of the real estate assignment containing Abraham Lincoln's mother's signature. This I am enclosing herewith.

You will be interested to know that one of Alexander Hamilton Merrifield's sisters married a George Tucker and he lived in this same section of the country. I am wondering if you have any data about him.

Hope we will see you here in Cleveland before too long.

Cordially and sincerely yours,

  
George E. Merrifield

ep



This I shall Oblige me or my executor to Convey to Sarah  
Johnston a certain lot of land containing one acre and  
one fourth lying Situate near Elizabeth Town and  
adjoining to Saml Helms lot and garden and Beginning  
about four feet north west of the South East Corner of Said  
Helms lot turning thence South Seventy east twenty  
poles to a stake thence north thirty one west twenty  
two poles to a stake thence <sup>along</sup> with of said Helm to the  
Beginning the said conveyance to be made when it will  
be thought most practicable with my hand seal

12<sup>th</sup> day February 1817

Test Edw Raddy

Saml Maycraft Jt



I do assign over the one  
 half of the <sup>within</sup> lot to  
 John Hadley & the one  
 half to the Mill Race

As Witness my hand  
 & seal this 17th day of  
 March 1819  
 John Hadley

John Hadley

John Hadley

I do assign the within lot to my wife & child and again  
 to the within obligation to give & take in for value received at  
 this my hand this 17th March 1819  
 John Hadley

July 3, 1951

Mr. George E. Merrifield  
The Higbee Company  
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Mr. Merrifield:

I was pleased indeed to hear from you and especially appreciate the photostats which you were kind enough to send. It will add very much to our information about Sarah Bush at Elizabethtown.

Your letter reaches me just as I am about to start on a months itinerary on the Pacific Coast. As soon as I return, will see if I can find some data on George Tucker.

Expect I will be in Cleveland more often from now on, as my youngest son Lester is with Merrill Lynch, Brokers, in their Cleveland Office.

With kindest personal regards to you and your family, I am

Very truly yours,

LAW:BB

Director

CHARLES E. QUICK  
AUBURN, N. Y.  
DIAL 2-1693

Auburn Ny Feb'y 16 1957

Dear Dr McMurtry -

Mrs Bernadine Bailey published a book -  
Abel Lincoln Other Mother - The story of Sarah Bush  
Lincoln.

It ended with the death of her son, although she  
lived 4 1/2 years thereafter.

I wrote to Mrs. Bailey asking why she did not  
continue the story through those remaining years.  
and received a nice reply saying there was nothing  
more she could offer than was contained in her book.

But I was anxious to learn how his Mother  
fared without the care or oversight of her son.

So I started correspondence with several persons  
of that locality.

I learned that she lived in her log cabin on  
Tombac Prairie until her death & cared for by  
different members of her family - not too willingly.

Prof Chas Coleman of Western Illinois College  
suggested that I obtain certain photostats from  
the Robert Lincoln collection at Library of Congress  
which I did - several of them - which told of  
the anxiety of the President for his Mother  
and the frequent complaints of her relatives



I have also an interesting letter from a Mr. Levine, whose father officiated at her funeral. And a letter from a Mr. Rogers which states that he had heard his grandmother tell that when she was a little girl, on passing the house, she with another girl on their way from school walked into the cabin to see the remains, in a black silk dress.

The Lions Club erected a monument to her and her husband at Shilo Park.

The Kiwanis Club on Dec 2, 1934 dedicated a fine fence that they had built around the lot.

I have failed to find any recognition of her life or death, by either the State or Nation because she was the step mother of President.

I prepared a paper, which has been read by several of our local literary clubs. It contains letters (Copies) from

Prof Coleman - Mrs Bailey - J. Monaghan. State Library Historian  
+ copies of letters from Washington Library  
of letters written to relatives regarding the President's mother.

Would be glad to send you a copy  
if you would be interested

Very truly

Charles B. Quice

181 Seneca St.

Auburn, N.Y.

The article in Saturday Evening Post  
on Lincoln Love induced me to  
write you

I have a good collection of  
Lincoln books & of Mr H Seward  
his Secy of State, whose residence  
here in Auburn is now a Seward  
Museum. and whose great-grand niece  
the wife of Secy Dulles, who also was  
an Auburn boy -

Pardon bad penmanship  
but my 96 years don't  
have a steady hand C B Q





March 1, 1957

Mr. Charles B. Quick  
Auburn, New York

Dear Mr. Quick:

We are delighted to learn of your interest in Lincolniana.

We would be pleased to have for our files a copy of the manuscript which you have prepared on the life of Lincoln's stepmother, if you should find it convenient to forward us a copy.

Sincerely,

MM:ss

(Miss) Margaret Moellering

CHARLES E. QUICK

AUBURN, N.Y.

Auburn, N.Y. March 28, 1957

Dear Miss Maellering-

Referring to your letter of March 1

I am enclosing copy of my research on  
the life of Lincoln's step mother.

Very truly

Charles E. Quick

C.B.R.

OK

Sarah Bush Lincoln

Step mother of Abraham Lincoln

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In gathering material for this paper I had in mind the life of Sarah Bush Lincoln from the time that Lincoln became of age and left home until her death, four and one-half years after his assassination.

Parts of the paper are quotations from various authors of Lincoln books and some from letters I have received from others which I gratefully acknowledge-

Letters from

Mr. George Rogers of Lerha, Ill giving incidents regarding Mrs Lincoln as related by his grandparents.

Mr. W.E. Lovins of Toledo Illinois, whose father officiated at Mrs. Lincoln's funeral

Mrs. Bernadine Bailey, authoress of the book "Abe Lincoln's Other Mother"

Prof Charles Coleman of Eastern State College, Charleston, Ill who was instrumental in my obtaining photostats of certain Lincoln letters from the Robert Lincoln collection at the Library of Congress.

Mrs. Louise C. Johnston, Reference Librarian o Rockford Ill Public Library.

Mr. J. Monaghan, State Librarian  
Historian, Springfield, Ill

Lions International Club Chicago  
Local Lions Club Mattoon Ill.

Kiwanis Club-- a program of the dedication of the beautiful iron fence erected around the Lincoln lot by the Kiwanis Club

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The material of my research was compiled by my friend, Miss Louise Robb of Glendale, Ohio

CHARLES B. QUICK  
Auburn, N.Y.

*Charles B. Quick*

Born Apr 15 1860 The day that Lincoln was elected President



2  
Sarah Bush Lincoln's home after 1851

With whom did she live during the years of Lincoln's Presidency and the years thereafter?

As the time for his departure for Washington neared Lincoln became anxious to see his step-mother and her daughters. He took the train at Springfield for Charleston and from Charleston drove with a friend, Augustus H. Chapman in a two-horse buggy to Farmington January 31, 1861. From the doorway of her daughter's house in the village, she watched him arrive. He was in Farmington from about 11-A.M. until the middle of the afternoon. He returned to Charleston to the home of Gus Chapman, his step-mother going with him. He left for Springfield early the next morning.. He requested Mr. Isaac Rogers, a neighbor of many years standing, to look after his Father's grave. When he and his step-mother parted she said that something told her they were never to meet again--"God bless you and keep you" my good son" she sobbed.

The question of the best choice for a home for Mrs. Lincoln arose not long after the death of her husband. Thomas Lincoln died January 17, 1851. That same year Lincoln sent the following letter to his Mother ;-

Dear Mother ;-

Chapman ( Her granddaughter Harriett's husband) tells me he wants you to go and live with him. If I were you, I would try it for awhile. If you get tired of it, which I think you will not, you can return to your old home. Chapman feels very kindly to you and I have no doubt he will make your situation very pleasant.

Sincerely your son A. Lincoln

It seems reasonable that for a time during the winter months, she followed her step-son's advice.

Prof Charles Coleman of the Department of Social Science of Western State College of Illinois, who is writing a book-- "The Lincolns of Coles County" says that she lived with her grandson, John Johnston Hall in the cabin built by her husband on Goose Nest Prairie, Pleasant Grove township, Coles County, Illinois and died there in 1869 at the age of 81 ~~In addition, however, she lived with the Halls~~

In addition, however, to living with the Halls, she lived for sometime at various intervals with her granddaughter, Harriett Hanks Chapman, daughter of Sarah Elizabeth Johnston Hanks and Dennis Hanks and with the family of John Sawyer, husband of her niece, Harriett Ridley Sawyer, for about two years in the early 60s. But the Goose Nest Prairie was her home

"No no Mother" he said  
"I live in the land and all  
"will be well - We shall see  
"each other again

3  
A photostat copy of a letter that I have taken from the Robert Todd Lincoln collection in the Library of Congress dated April 5, 1964 makes the statement that Mrs. Lincoln was at that time living with her daughter, Sarah Elizabeth Johnston Hanks and Dennis Hanks.

The letter reads as follows ;~

April 5 1854

Dear Abe ;~

I received your check for \$50.00  
I showed it to Mother. She cried like a child.  
Abe, she is mighty childish. Heap of trouble to us.

Betsy is feeble and has to wait on her  
which orto have somebody to wait on her.

We are getting old. We have a great many to wait on  
of our own connections  
They will come to see us while they live.

Abe, Charles has enlisted again for three years  
or during the war. This is hard on Mother.

Abe, we had a horrible time Monday at court.  
It broke up. Got into a fuss about a drunken soldier.  
I never saw such a time. There was eight or nine  
killed in the fight-- one you no-- Doct Torke of Paris,  
Edgar County. Young H. Winkler was wounded.

Abe, I received a letter from Sophia Lynch.  
Now John Legrand is her last husband. She wants to  
no whether you are Abe Lincoln, her cousin or not..  
Is that not strange to you. It was to me.  
Her boys all in the army-- Younion boys at Hoxburg.

Abe, you know Hans Stein, a strong Younion boy as  
Charles Hanks. I am mighty afraid that Rheopolis  
will go in the army with Charles. He is 15 years old  
a very good boy. He can shoot as well as I can.

Abe, remember my boys if you can. I dont want  
anything. How is your family Nothing more  
Write me a few lines if you feel like it.

Very respectfully

D. F. Hanks



X

a second letter from the Robert Todd Lincoln collection indicates that Sarah Bush Lincoln had again returned to the Halls. It was written by John Johnston Hall, her grandson on October 18, 1864 and is marked "private"

It is a letter that must have made Lincoln very sad as well as doubtful in whom to believe.

Dear Uncle -

This leaves us all well except grandmother. She is quite puny. I write to inform you that Grandmother has not and did not receive one cent that you sent her. She now needs clothes and shoes. Dennis and Chapman keep all the money you send her in their pockets and Uncle Dennis is cussing all the time and abusing you and me and all of your best friends for supporting you. They make you believe they are supporting her which is not the case.. I and my sister are now taking care of her and have for the past four years. If you wish her to have anything, send it to the bank in Charleston and send soon for I tell you upon the honor of a man, she does not get it and Dennis has threatened to put her on the County. I hope to hear from you soon.. Brother Alfred is wounded and badly shot through the foot and is in the hospital at Quincy. He was wounded at Dallas, Ga. Georgia 27th last May. I remain your nephew

John J. Hall

P.S. I have written this plain letter at grandmother's request she has been asking me to do so for days.

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We can only guess what Lincoln's reaction was to this letter, but as the President was a shrewd and discerning student of human nature, he had sufficient warning by this time to know whom to trust and whom to suspect of dishonest dealings.

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Here is another letter, a later one, from the Robert Lincoln collection written by Mrs. Lincoln's granddaughter, Harriet Hanks Chapman. She complains that her grandmother is failing in health, is deprived of every comfort and begs the Chapmans to take her to live with them.

Charleston, Ill Jan'y 17, 1865-

Hon. A. Lincoln

Dear Uncle -

I have been intending to write to you for some time but felt so bad I had not the heart to write to anybody save my husband. Our family has recently met with a great loss. God in his Divine mercy has seen fit to take from our midst a kind and beloved Mother. She died the 15th of December after an illness of about six months. In her death we have lost a devoted Mother whose place can never be filled. You also have lost a friend for Mother was indeed a friend of you. She spoke often of you during her last months. Father takes her death very hard. He is not well and I fear is not long for this world. I was down to see Grandma Lincoln on New Years Day



She seems to be failing and is grieving herself about Mother. Poor woman, how my heart aches for her. She was destitute of every comfort. She wants to leave there and come to my house and says she is badly treated. I told her it was impossible to take her now for my home is small and not very comfortable for my large family. I told her to wait until my husband comes home-- his time of service expires the 17th of February-- and then I would try to do something for her.

It looks too hard for such a good woman to spend her last days in want and misery and I for one will do as I have always done my part in her behalf and now want you to assist me by giving my husband a position so that he can support his family and get them a home and then we can take care of Grandma so long as she lives if we should be spared that long.

You can do this and not discomode yourself and I think Augustus deserves your favor. He has always been a strong Union man, spent time and money in your election and has now been in the army three years and three months and would remain longer if his family were better situated. During that time he has never been sick a day or unfit for duty and has never had but one furlough home and that for fifteen days only. He has not made anything but a living for himself and family and that is why I ask your assistance feeling sure you would not deny me and him.

Grandmother told me to write you to do all that you could for us for she would rather live with us than anywhere else.

The rest of the relatives are all feeling well.

The rolling months have brought us to the end of another year. There has been much suffering throughout the land during that time. There are many vacant chairs. Homes have been made desolate, partings endured. Heart strings have been broken and widows and orphans have mourned for their loved ones and lost. But we look forward to a better future and welcome young '65 with bright hopes and pleasant anticipations.. Let us hope before the close, smiling faces will return once more and scatter blessings throughout the land.

Well I have written a longer letter than I intended to trouble you with this time and if I have transgressed I hope you will forgive.

If you are disposed and can give Augustus assistance, please let us know soon. He will be home in about six weeks.

Remember me kindly to your wife and children

Harriett D. Chapman

One point this letter does not make clear and that is just where Mrs. Lincoln was living at that time. Clearly she was not with the Chapmans neither does it seem likely that she was in Dennis Hanks home.

Harriet would scarcely have been writing Lincoln complaints of the way her own father treated grandma Lincoln.



Probably she was at the home of John Hall in the Goose Nest Prairie cabin as she had definitely lived with the Sawyers in the early 60s and we know that she was living in the Lincoln cabin at the time of her death

The Goose Nest Prairie cabin was apparently a great improvement over similar ones in which the Lincolns had dwelt.. To judge from the pictures it was twice as long as the ordinary frontier cabin, had two front doors, two windows and a central chimney./ In spite however of a more commodious building, the poverty of the Lincoln family after Abe left home was often acute-- one financial trouble following another. The east part of this cabin was built in 1837-- the west part in 1840 and joined together in 1840.

In 1840 Thomas Lincoln possessed 120 acres of land near Charleston, Illinois with considerable strain on his financial resources,. Not long after, he was in difficulty and called on his son for help and on October 26, 1841 Lincoln came to his father's assistance with \$200.00 allowing Thomas and Sarah Lincoln to retain a life interest in the estate..

In December 1848 a creditor obtained a judgement and threatened to force a sale of his father's land. Once again Thomas appealed to his father who came to his aid..

Soon after Thomas Lincoln's death in 1851, Lincoln as his father's heir, conveyed his interest in the west 80 acres to his step-brother Johnston for a nominal consideration subject to Sarah Lincoln's right of dower-- the use for life of ~~an~~ <sup>one-third</sup> one-third. Johnson failing to receive from Lincoln eighty Dollars that he asked to borrow, persuaded his mother to relinquish her right of dower in the west eighty acres and then proposed to sell the whole farm and move to Missouri. Although Lincoln was not able to protect his stepmother's right of dower in the west 80 acres, he refused to sell the east 40 acres, saying to Johnston that his mother had the use of the whole as long as she lived. Lincoln then administered a sharp rebuke to his step-brother who eventually gave up the idea of selling and moving to Missouri. However Lincoln continued to aid his step-brother who was always in debt, shiftless, restless and discontented.

-----  
Copy of letter from Lincoln to Johnston.

You are not lazy and still you are an idler  
I doubt whether since I saw you, you have done a day's work in any one day.  
This habit of needlessly waisting time is the whole difficulty. It is vastly important to you and still more important to your children that you should break this habit. If you hire yourself at ten dollars a month, from me you will get ten dollars more making twenty dollars per month for your work.  
In this I do not mean that you shall go off to St. Louis or the lead mines or gold mines or California but I mean for you to go at it for the best you can get in Coles County. You say you would almost give your place in Heaven for seventy-five or eighty dollars. Then you value your place in Heaven very cheap for with the offer I make you can get seventy or eighty dollars for four or five months work



6  
When Lincoln found out that Johnston was anxious to sell the land that he lived on an move to Missouri, he wrote again as follows :-

Such a notion is utterly foolish. What can you do in Missouri better then here. Is the land any richer? Can you there any more than here raise corn and wheat and Oats without work? Will anybody there any more than here do your work for you? If you intend to go to work there is no better place than right where you are, If you do not intend to work, you cannot get along anywhere Squirring and crawling about from place to place can do you no good. What you really want, is to sell the land, get the money and spend it.. Part with the land tha you have and my life upon it, you will never have a spot big enough to bury you in. One half that you will get you will spend in moving-- the other half you will eat, drink and wear out and no foot of land will be bought. Now I feel that it is my duty to have no hand in such foolery. I feel that it is so on your account and particularly on Mother's account. The eastern forty I intend to keep for Mother while she lives. If you will not cultivate it, I will rent it for enough to support her-- at least it will rent for something. Her dower in the other two forties, she can let you have, no thanks to me. I do not write this in any unkindness. Your thousand preenses for not getting along are all nonsense. They deceive nobody but yourself. Go to work is the only sure cure for your cause

Yours A. Lincoln.

From Lincoln to Johnston, another letter--

Charleston ~~Ill~~ Nov 25 1851

John D. Johnston

Dear Brother -

Your letter of the 22d just received.

Your proposal about selling east 40 acres of land is all that I want or could claim for myself but I am not satisfied with it on Mother's account.. I want her to have her living and feel that it is my duty to some extent to see that she is not wronged. She had a dower right in the other two forties but it seems she has let you take this hook and line. She now has the use of the whole east fifty as long as she lives and if it is sold she is of course entitled to the interest of the money that it brings as long as she lives. But you propose to sell it for three hundred dollars, take one hundred away with you and leave her two hundred dollars at 8 percent, making her the enormous sum of \$16.00 per year. Now if you are satisfied with this kind of treatment to her, I am not. It is true that you are to have that fifty for two hundred dollars at Mother's death but you are not to have it before I am confident that the land can be made to produce for Mother at least \$30 a year and I cannot, to oblige any living being, consent that she shall be put on an allowance of \$16.00 a year.

Yours &c

A. Lincoln

Johnston moved to Jarvey Co. Arkansas in the Ozarks -



## The Lincoln Farm

Perhaps the basis for some of the financial troubles of Thomas and Sarah Lincoln and for the latter's **appsal** to Lincoln for money were laid as early as 1840.

On August 4, 1837 John H. Johnston entered a 40 acre tract on Goose Nest Prarie, eight miles south of Charleston. On May 21 1839 Reuben Moore and his wife entered two 40 acre tracts directly west of Johnstons 49 acres. These tracts were deeded to Thomas Lincoln on March 5 1840 for \$400.00. On the last day of the same year Thomas Lincoln paid Johnston \$50.00 for his land thus increasing his holdings to 120 acres.

In acquiring this farm Thomas Lincoln stretched his resources considerably and within less than a year was in financial difficulty. Finally he applied to his son for help and October 24, 1841 Lincoln eased his Father's distress by paying him \$200. for the est 40 acres of the farm allowing Thomas and Sarah Bush Lincoln to retain a life estate..

To this deed Thomas Lincoln signed his name but Mrs. Lincoln made her mark. By paying his Father \$200.00 for a tract that had cost only \$50.00, Lincoln was making his parents a substantial gift.. The next day he signed a bond agreeing to payvey this land to Johnston at any time within a year after the death of the survivor of Thomas Lincoln and Sarah Bush Lincoln upon payment of \$200.00.

But this by no meand ended Thomas Lincoln's troubles. In December 1848 a creditor obtained judgement and threatened to force a sale of his Father's land. mOnce again Thomas Lincoln appealed to his son and again the son came to his aid.

" Your letter of the 7th was received night before last. I very cheerfully send you the twenty dollars which sum you say is necessary to save your land from sale"

Thomas Lincoln died on the farm January 17, 1941. Soon afterwards on August 12, 1951, Lincoln, as his Father's heir conveyed his interest in the west 80 acres to Johnston for a nppminal consideration subject to Sarah Lincoln's dower right.

On a leaflet on The Lincoln Log Cabin State Park published by thevState of Illinois we find this statement about the ownership of the farm.--

"After Thomas Lincoln's death in 1851, Lincoln refused to sell his interest in the east 40 acres, retaining it for the use of his step-mother. John J. Hall who had purchased the west 80 acres acquired title to the remainder--the east 40 acres---- in 1888 by reason of 20 years of undisputed possession"

Prof. Coleman, Professor of department of History and Economics, Eastern Illinois State College says that John Johnston Hall, Sarah Bush Lincoln's grandson, had secured the Thomas Lincoln farm--the west 80 acres-- from his uncle, John Davis Johnston, following the death of Thomas Lincoln



But others besides John Johnston were responsible for Mrs. Lincoln's situation-

Dennis Hanks received a check for \$50.00 which probably he had asked for (See page 2 ) In acknowledging it he writes-  
"Abe remember my boys if you can. I dont ask anything"

John J Hall, although he assured Lincoln that he and his mother had cared for his grandmother for the past four years, begged Lincoln to send money soon to prevent his grandmother being sent to the County House.

Harriett Chapman pleads her house is too small and lacks comforts and her family ~~is~~ large and therefore she cannot take grandmother. Her promise of future help is conditioned upon Lincoln giving her husband a position so that he can support his family and get them a home "and then we will take care of grandmother"

Mr. W.H. Levins, son of the minister who conducted the funeral services of Mrs. Lincoln writes " The Lincolns were considered poor even in these days when poor people were the rule" "Mrs Lincoln was a good Christian woman and home-maker but rather handicapped by poverty and a shiftless husband. It is a fact that about all he ever accomplished was through the assistance of his son Abe."

While the hardships of Pioneer life might account for many of the family difficulties, the Lincolns were hardly responsible for the mismanagement and dishonorable conduct of some of the members of the family.

1949

Mr. George Rogers of Larna in a letter dated July 25 1949 to Rev. Horace Batcheler, minister of Mattoon Presbyterian Church has this to say about Mrs. Lincoln's home after Thomas Lincoln's death-

Sarah Bush Lincoln considered the cabin where its replica now stands her home and lived there until her death in 1869. Some writers think she may have lived with her daughter at Charleston (Sarah Elizabeth Johnston) but she did not. The older people in this community remember her living on the Lincoln farm until her death. She lived a quiet life with her grandson John J. Hall.

In Ida Tarbell's Life of Lincoln Vol. I opposite page 26 there is a reproduction of a photograph of Sarah Bush Lincoln which about 1895 was in possession of her granddaughter, Harriet Hanks Chapman Below this portrait in addition to the dates of her marriage to Daniel Johnston and his death, and her marriage to Thomas Lincoln, are these two statements--

"Sarah Bush Lincoln was born in Kentucky December 13, 1768  
She died April 10, 1869 "



Mr. Rogers letter, further states --

I have heard my grandmother Phinns tell about going to the Lincoln cabin after Sarah Bush Lincoln died. My grandmother Phinns, whose name was Sarah Bulch, a sister of Uncle George Bulch, was fourteen years old at that time and lived less than a mile from the Lincoln cabin, where she had been born and raised. I have heard her tell about a girl by the name of Mary Bidle who was then sixteen, coming by and the two walked over to the Lincoln cabin to view the last remains of Sarah Bush Lincoln. Grandmother said she was buried in a black silk dress and a white frilled cap, tied on with a white ribbon that went under her chin. The black silk dress had been given to her as a present from her stepson, Abraham Lincoln, when he left her as he departed for Washington. Grandfather Rogers said he didn't go to the funeral but remembered seeing the procession passing. He said it came from the south to the corner by our house and turned west to go to the cemetery. The body was taken to the Shilo Cemetery about two miles west of the Lincoln home where her husband, Thomas Lincoln was buried.

Mr. W.M. Lovins of Toledo, <sup>I/s</sup> Ohio, writes March 23, 1950, as follows--

My father, the Rev. Aaron Lovins of Toledo, Illinois preached her funeral sermon. He was a Campbellite (Christian) preacher and school-teacher. He had been holding services in the Webster schoolhouse, about 2 1/2 miles south of the Lincoln home. Mrs. Lincoln regularly attended the meetings but was not a member of that denomination, but when she passed away, father was called upon to preach her funeral sermon, probably because of this association at the meetings. He stood in the doorway as he preached and neighbors stood in the yard south of the house. The living room of the cabin was too small to accommodate all who came to the funeral. There was no special demonstration made either by the State or Government because of the fact that she was the stepmother of the President.

In 1924, the Linons Club of Illinois discovered that the old stone marker erected by the Lincoln graves in 1880 was being mutilated and chipped away. In 1924, with appropriate ceremonies the old stone was replaced by a beautiful monument. Later the Kiwanis Club placed at the Lincoln lot two small markers to mark the separate graves. On December 2, 1934 a number of Kiwanis Clubs, belonging to the Kiwanis International dedicated a beautiful iron fence which now encloses the Lincoln lot. A committee of the Kiwanis Club is appointed each year to keep the lot in good repair.

"I knowed when he went away he'd never come back alive"

She answered them

Quiet and composed she was, the usage of the earth in her

to the farm house and told the news to an old woman.

to the White House, out on the Illinois Prairie men went

While the dead President's body was being borne back

From Sandburg's "The War Years" Vol 4



61

ner

During the years between the death of the President and that of his step-mother 1869, there seemed to be no family contact excepting that Mrs. Lincoln Dec 12, 1867 wrote to his step-mother and sent her some dress goods and \$10.00. Shortly after that she went to Europe taking Tad with her. Her eldest son, Robert, did not evidently wish to be identified with his Father's people. The step-mother died while the President's wife was in Europe

### The Fate of the Lincoln Cabin

Mr. William Lovins writes as follows-

Noone thought of Thomas Lincoln and his wife as being great because of Abe until about the time of the World' exposition at Chicago in 1893.

The exposition authorities came down and moved the Lincoln cabin to Chicago and had it re-erected there. It was never returned however it has been pretty well established that Robert Lincoln, son of Abraham Lincoln, was so humiliated by the publicity it gave to the background of his family that after the exposition he either had it cut up for firewood or as someone has said it was loaded with stone on a flat boat and sunk in Lake Michigan. In any event, it was entirely lost at the close of the exposition. But the U.S. Government erected an exact replica on the exact spot occupied by the original in the Lincoln Park-- The Lincoln Log Cabin Park at the old Lincoln homestead about 7 miles from Toledo, Illinois. This cabin and outbuildings and grounds are maintained by the United States Government.

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### NOTE

I mailed a copy of this paper to Prof. Charles Coleman of the Eastern Illinois State College, Charleston, Ill and this is his reply-

Oct 10, 1952

Dear Mr. Quick-

Many thanks for the chance to read your interesting article. I have jotted down a few notes. The forthwith issue of the Lincoln Herald has an article written by me on Mrs. Sarah Bush Lincoln

Cordially

Charles H. Coleman

### Lincoln's Mother.

**I**N last Sunday's edition of The Star, headed "Ahead in Lincoln Study," an article told of films being shown by the Kansas City public library.

The article said that the film would be devoted to Lincoln's stepmother, "Nancy Hanks."

I thought every school child knew that Nancy Hanks was Lincoln's real mother and that



Sarah Bush Lincoln.

his stepmother was Sarah Bush Johnson.

The article spoke of the stepmother twice and it seems strange how such a mistake could occur. Sarah Bush, a widow Johnson, was a good stepmother to Lincoln, but Nancy Hanks was his natural mother and died when Abe was 9 years old!

I hope the film so depicts these facts!

Mrs. John Earls.

Liberty.

[Editor's Note: An extensive search of the files of The Star and the reference collection of the Kansas City public library failed to produce a single picture of Nancy Hanks, the mother of Abraham Lincoln.]

### Surcease—for One Day.

**A**S we pay tribute to Honest Abraham Lincoln this February 12, let's forget politics one day, and remember the man. The man who came up from the ranks, through honesty and hard rail splitting and sincerity.

Estell Arthur Owens.

5221 East Fifty-first.



STRANGE AS IT SEEMS

By Hix



SARA BUSH LINCOLN,  
 ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S  
 STEPMOTHER,  
 DID NOT WANT ABE  
 TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT  
 AND DID NOT WANT  
 HIM ELECTED--  
 SHE HAD A PREMONITION  
 THAT SOMETHING  
 WOULD BEFALL HIM!  
 SHE OUTLIVED HIM  
 BY FOUR YEARS!

CLAM EGGS  
 ARE INCUBATED  
 IN THE GILLS OF  
 THEIR PARENTS



LITTLE  
 WINGS,  
 AILLETES,  
 WERE WORN  
 BY MEDIEVAL  
 KNIGHTS TO  
 KEEP GLANCING  
 SWORD BLOWS  
 FROM CUTTING  
 THEIR  
 SHOULDERS!



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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

500 (LINCOLN, ABRAHAM): A lot of three items relating to Abraham Lincoln's family. Included are - 1.) A D.S.,  $\frac{1}{2}$  p., oblong 8vo, Sept. 19, 1797; being a promissory note, witnessed by Rev. Jesse Head, who officiated at the wedding of Thomas and Nancy Hanks in 1806. 2.) A D.S., "Chas. Helm", as Deputy Sheriff of Harian County, 8vo, 1 p., Oct. 20, 1803; summoning persons as guards to assist him. Among those named, "Thomas Lincoln for six days service". 3.) A D.S., "R.S. Todd", June 23, 1826; small folio, 1 p.; a litigation bond signed by the father of Mary Todd Lincoln, for costs relating to a suit brought by David Todd in Fayette Co., Ky.. All three items have (fold lines and minor aging and staining), otherwise very good. (Est. 150-200)

501 (LINCOLN, A.): A D.S., Jany., 23, 1778, 1 p., small 4to, by Abraham Lincoln, grandfather of the president. This being a leaf from a ledger, "Col. Abraham Lincoln's Account". Entry dated July 31, 1777, lists his pay from April 10, 1777 to Jan. 23, 1778, as a Sub-Lieutenant for 104 pounds, among other expenditures. Followed by the entry, "Received of Jacob Morgan the full contents of the above account", signed, "Abraham Lincoln". (Fold line, aging, ink smears not affecting signature, edge roughness), otherwise fine. Lincoln's grandfather served in the Revolutionary War unit of 1777, and was a member of the Philadelphia Convention of 1790. (See Oliver Barrett Collection, Parke-Bernet sale, 1952, p.2, lot 7.) (Est. 550-650)

502 (LINCOLN, A.): A D.S., Azel Dorsey, 2 pp., small folio, Dec. 31, 1805. A lease for a farm, this document is signed by Dorsey who was Lincoln's teacher when he was 13 years old. (Overall aging, fold lines, with weakness, fragile). Also included is a D.S., relating to the Dorsey family regarding the sale (among other "cargo"), "one likely negro woman slave hand Amy to have and to hold...". (Fold lines, roughness, aging). A total of two items. (Est. 150-250)

503 A. LINCOLN: An A.D., "The County of Sangamon, 1836", oblong 16mo. A pay order, written in Lincoln's hand, unsigned; "To David McGinnis Dr., To services as Road Supervisor \$6.00". (Age toning, soiling to left margin; upper right and lower left corner missing, not affecting text; very minor smear, later pencil notation on verso), otherwise fine. During this year, Lincoln would be elected to the Illinois House of Representatives, from Sangamon County. This pay order may have some relationship to a project Lincoln had put through the Legislature the year before, the incorporation of the Beardstown and Sangamon Canal; or perhaps it was payment for work done on his own newly acquired property, near New Salem. (Est. 800-900)

504 LINCOLN, A.: An A.D., Sept. 9, 1839, Pike County, Ill., 1 p., 4to.. An affidavit of William Edwards, written in Lincoln's hand, in the case of "The People of the State of Illinois vs. William W. Edwards", who, this states, was found guilty of "resisting an officer in the attempt to execute legal process..." and protest, as "...He is informed...one of the jurors...is a subject of the Crown of Great Britain...". Signed by Edwards, witnessed and docketed by Jones Clark, Clerk. (Fold lines, overall aging to paper" 1  $\frac{1}{8}$  x  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch hole in text, 1" tear at right margin affecting one word of text; several ink stains), otherwise writing is bold and strong. (Est. 1,500-2,500)

505 LINCOLN, A.: An A.D., n.p., n.d. (1853), 1 p., small folio. "A bill for an act to reduce the limits of the eighth judicial circuit, and to fix the times for holding courts therein...". Lists locations and times for sessions. Verso contains two lines, "By this act; and that this act shall be in force from and after its passage". Docketed on verso, in Lincoln's hand also, "Passed the Senate Jany. 25, 1853, R.E. Goodell Secy. Senate; Passed the House of Reps. Jan. 31st 1853

a substitute F.D. Preston, Appt. Clk.". (Fold lines, with early tape repairs on verso, also with fold weakness, margin roughness, aging and soiling), otherwise bold and strong. (Est. 2,500-3,500)

506 LINCOLN, A.: An A.D., being six lines of cross examination, written by Lincoln on a legal pleading; 2 pp., small folio, n.d., (Circuit of Woodford County). Being a deposition of witness, Lee Springate, to be read in evidence in the trial between John Monahan and J.J. Saw and Wm. Vandike regarding the possession of horses. Lincoln writes at the end of Springate's deposition, "Re-Cross examination by defendants - The morning of the sale, Saw said that he wanted to go and buy horses and wanted Vandike to go with him and be his security; and then they both, and this witness, went to the sale together (The plaintiff objects to this last piece of evidence)". (Fold lines, margin is rough where removed from ledger, very minor aging), otherwise fine. (Est. 750-950)

507 LINCOLN, A.: An A.L.S., 4to, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  pp., Springfield, June 25, 1852, to Onslow Peters, Esq.. Lincoln writes Atty. Peters concerning a legal case involving real estate belonging to a minor against which a claim has been made. Atty. Lincoln writes, "...At my own expense I went to Jacksonville once, and investigated the claim and decided it to be valueless -". He goes on to explain the circumstances of the original court order executed by a Judge Lockwood of the Morgan Circuit Court, and closes, "Yours as ever, A. Lincoln". (Fold lines with weakness, age toning and soiling on verso), text and signature are bold and strong. At this point of his life, Lincoln had decided to focus on his increasing legal practice and was resolved to leave political matters to others, although we know that on the very next day, the "National Intelligencer" of Washington reported that Lincoln had been appointed the Illinois Member of the Whig National Committee. His participation in the presidential campaign of that year was perfunctory, while his appearances in court were frequent and successful. (Est. 4,500-5,500)

508 LINCOLN, A.: An A.E.S., "Stuart & Lincoln", a five line docket on verso of an A.L.S. from Martin L. Bishop, Bloomington, Feb. 19, 1855, to Messrs. Lincoln and Stewart (sic), 1 p., 4to. Mr. Bishop writes, "As the time for circuit is now approaching and I want to at this term to try my Friends!! (so to speak) the Illinois Central R.R. Co. another battle for the loss and damage...sustained...losing part of my farm and damaging the same by throwing it open which they have been the means of. I therefore wish you to take charge of the suit...". Lincoln instructs Bishop on verso, "Send us a copy of your deed to the Railroad for the Right of Way over your land - We will then get up the papers for a suit. Yours truly, Stuart & Lincoln". (Fold lines, minute holes at folds, some aging and minor staining and soiling), otherwise fine. (Est. 2,800-3,800)

509 LINCOLN, SARAH BUSH: A D.S. with her mark, 1 p., 8vo, n.p., June 18, 1857. A receipt for \$20.50 from John Hall, "in full payment of a note I have on him..."; witnessed by A.W. Chapman. (Fold lines, overall aging, 2 minute holes at folds, ink smears), otherwise fine. Sarah became Abraham Lincoln's stepmother when he was 10 years old. She was to endear herself to him, especially with her admiration and encouragement of his intellectual pursuits. Though being unable to read or write herself, Sarah shared her love of those accomplishments with her new son, and was a major influence in the young man's life. He was to call her "Mother" until his death. This autograph is extremely rare, as only several are known to exist. (See the Collection of Oliver R. Barrett, Parke-Bernet sale 1315, Feb. 1952, lot 133; Sandburg's "Lincoln Collector", p. 136.) (Est. 3,200-3,800)

510 LINCOLN, A.: An A.E.S., "A. Lincoln", Feb. 27, 1862, as President, 16vo, on plain paper. "I certainly shall be very glad if Gov. Morgan (Edwin D., of New York) shall consider it proper for him to restore

Executive Mansion,

Washington, March 23, 1864.

Major General Meade

Army of Potomac

Please suspend execution  
of Hanson Oston, under sentence for desertion,  
until further orders

A. Lincoln

LINCOLN LETTER

## PART II

### AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION OF A NEW YORK PRIVATE COLLECTOR WITH SELECTED ADDITIONS

Saturday, October 8, 1988 — 2:00 P.M. (Approx.)

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Auctioneer: DALE STULZ

## VanHorn, Cindy

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**From:** VanHorn, Cindy  
**Sent:** Friday, January 18, 2002 11:07 AM  
**To:** 'roll-on-00@att.net'  
**Subject:** RE: Sara Bush Lincoln/ who took this photo?

Phil,  
I'm sorry, I can find no information in our collection on who took the Sara Bush Lincoln photograph. It may have been taken by a traveling photographer who didn't use a stamp. If Lloyd Ostendorf didn't have the information on the photographer for his book "Lincoln in Photographs", then it probably just isn't available. He spent most of his life studying and collecting Lincoln and Lincoln related photographs.

Cindy VanHorn  
Registrar & Library Assistant  
The Lincoln Museum  
200 E. Berry Street, P.O. Box 7838  
Fort Wayne IN 46802

-----Original Message-----

From: roll-on-00@att.net [mailto:roll-on-00@att.net]  
Sent: Tuesday, January 08, 2002 4:48 AM  
To: TheLincolnMuseum@LNC.com  
Subject: Sara Bush Lincoln/ who took this photo?

To who?.can help:.....I have been challenged to find out what Studio and photographer had taken the one-and-only photo known to exist of Mrs.Sara Bush Lincoln-(Abraham Lincoln's)step motherMost photo's of this peiord have a stamp on the back w/the Studio's name and the photographer's name.I can not find any mention of this in any of the books I have looked through,just that the photograph was taken around the year 1865.Can you help w/the Studio and photographer's names.....Thank you Phil



**VanHorn, Cindy**

---

**From:** Lincolnbuff@cs.com  
**Sent:** Monday, January 14, 2002 10:59 PM  
**To:** CJVanHorn@Inc.com  
**Subject:** Re: A little info needed

Cindy,

I was asked the same question. There is no definitive answer. We have a publication (somewhat incomplete) that gives lists of photographers who were working in the area. I gave the person three Charleston names of possible photographers. I also cautioned the person that these people were not the only ones who could have taken the photo - the list of unknown possibilities included traveling photographers, other area photographers (especially Mattoon, Illinois) and the possibility Herndon arranged for his own photographer.

So, there you have it - a complete, incomplete answer. How did I do? Hope all is well. Will I be able to see anyone from your fair establishment on Feb. 12 (ALA Symposium) or do you all have prior plans?

Take care,

Kim

*Kim Bauer, Curator  
Illinois State Historical Library*

## VanHorn, Cindy

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**From:** VanHorn, Cindy  
**Sent:** Monday, January 14, 2002 5:20 PM  
**To:** 'lincolnbuff@cs.com'  
**Subject:** A little info needed

Cindy,

I was asked the same question. There is no definitive answer. We have a publication (somewhat incomplete) that gives lists of photographers who were working in the area. I gave the person three Charleston names of possible photographers. I also cautioned the person that these people were not the only ones who could have taken the photo - the list of unknown possibilities included traveling photographers, other area photographers (especially Mattoon, Illinois) and the possibility Herndon arranged for his own photographer.

Take care,

Kim

\*\*\*\*\*Original message\*\*\*\*\*

Hi Kim,  
Hope the new year is starting out well for you.

I hope that you can find a spare couple of minutes to answer a question for me. I've been asked who took the photograph of Sarah Bush Lincoln and I'm not finding that information here, so far. According to Lloyd Ostendorf, the photograph was taken about 1865 when Sarah was 77 years old probably at Charleston IL, but he doesn't say who took it. Do you by any chance have that information?

Thank you!

Cindy VanHorn  
Registrar & Library Assistant  
The Lincoln Museum  
200 E. Berry Street, P.O. Box 7838  
Fort Wayne IN 46802

The New York Times

## Opinionator

JANUARY 29, 2011, 7:00 PM

## Lincoln's Other Mother

By TED WIDMER

Disunion follows the Civil War as it unfolded.

## Tags:

abraham lincoln, Illinois,  
sarah lincoln, stepmothers

On the evening of Jan. 30, 1861, a slow freight train chugged into the small hamlet of Charleston, Ill., having completed a 12-mile run from Mattoon. Or nearly 12 miles — the train didn't quite make it all the way to the station. A few people straggled out of the caboose and trudged through slush and ice toward the depot, where a gaggle of townsfolk loitered. To their astonishment, they realized that the tall man coming toward them, wearing a shawl, was Abraham Lincoln.

He did not seem very presidential. He had been traveling all day to cover the 120 miles from Springfield, and had missed the last passenger train to Charleston — hence the ignominious arrival by freight. According to an observer, he wore “a faded hat, innocent of a nap, and his coat was extremely short, more like a sailor's pea-jacket than any other describable garment. A well-worn carpet-bag, quite collapsed, comprised his baggage.” He had no bodyguard.

Across the country, people were saying goodbye as the new world shaped by secession came into focus. Some did it loudly — the grandiloquent farewell speeches of Southern senators and still-serving cabinet members — but most did it quietly, inside the family. As Lincoln wrapped up his affairs in Springfield, he realized that he needed to say a special goodbye to someone who had arguably done more to shape him than any other.

And so on the morning of the 30th, this most closely observed person slipped away from it all and boarded a train in Springfield to the southeast. We know that it departed at 9:50 — the United States was beginning to acquire the railroad precision for which it would become famous. But that precision was not yet universal, and Lincoln did not make all of his planned transfers. He handled it the way he usually did — fellow passengers that day remembered that he told an endless succession of droll stories, punctuated by his own hearty laughter.

Lincoln spent the night of the 30th in Charleston, and the next morning began the final phase of his journey, to reach the secluded farmhouse where he found a 72-year-old woman, his father's widow, Sarah Bush Lincoln.

Disunion follows the Civil War as it unfolded.

## Tags:

abraham lincoln, Illinois,  
sarah lincoln, stepmothers

“Stepmother” can be a fraught phrase in the telling of childhood stories — one thinks of Cinderella and the well-named Brothers Grimm — yet it was a very good day for

Lincoln when she came into his life. His mother, Nancy Hanks, had died when he was nine years old, and we don't have to look far for the sources

Abraham Lincoln Historical Digitization Project, Source: Chicago Historical Society Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's stepmother.



of his legendary melancholia. In 1844, as a rising local politician, he returned to the Indiana of his boyhood and was so moved by the experience of being near the graves of his mother and sister that he wrote an uncharacteristically emotional poem about it. It began:

My childhood home I see again,  
And gladden with the view;  
And still as mem'ries crowd my brain,  
There's sadness in it too —

Sarah Bush Lincoln had known sadness, too — a difficult marriage to an improvident husband — but after her husband died, Thomas Lincoln came to Kentucky and proposed to her on the spot (they knew each other from childhood). She accepted, on condition that her late husband's debts be paid, and together they came to the Pigeon Creek settlement in Indiana, with her three children and all of her worldly possessions. Although she was illiterate, these possessions included several books, including "Aesop's Fables," "Robinson Crusoe," Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" and "Sinbad the Sailor." We are today so cosseted by technology that it is difficult to imagine the impact that these world-expanding devices — the iPads of their day — must have had on the young Lincoln. Years later, she remembered that moment, and remarked that she instantly set to work to help Abe and his sister become "more human" — implying that, like Robinson Crusoe, she had discovered young savages in the wilderness.

Under her guidance, Lincoln made rapid progress. "He read all the books he could get his hands on," she recalled, and was already practicing writing and speaking at a young age, eager to get at the exact meaning of words. After hearing sermons by a local preacher, he would sometimes stand on a stump, gather the children around, and "almost repeat it word for word."

She obviously was behind this progress — she remembered, "His mind and mine, what little I had, seemed to run together, more in the same channel." She added other information, vital to future biographers — that he cared little for clothes, or food, but a great deal for ideas. Also, tucked away in her memories, the surprising physical fact that young Lincoln was "more fleshy in Indiana than ever in Illinois."

As his star rose, he saw her less and less, and did not attend his father's funeral in 1851, which has led scholars to speculate about what may or may not have been a difficult relationship. But there is no doubt about the closeness of stepmother and stepson. On Jan. 3, as Lincoln was preparing his cabinet, he received a letter from a kinsman, saying that "she is getting somewhat childish and is very uneasy about you fearing some of your political opponents will kill you. She is very anxious to see you once more." And so he went.

It was quite a reunion. Local folk remembered it for decades. Word got out quickly to neighboring farms, and families came over to celebrate, bringing turkey, chicken, and pie. The local school released the children for the day, and Lincoln laughed with them (he told them he'd rather be in their place than his). Some of them walked in his shoes, to feel what it must be like to be president. One youngster there, a six-year-old named Buck Best, lived until 1947, and never tired of reliving the day.

That evening Lincoln gave a speech in Charleston's town hall, one of many we do not have recorded. It's a pity, because he spoke about his boyhood that night. Lincoln rarely went into autobiographical territory, to put it mildly. Unlike today's politicians, for whom every childhood challenge is an opportunity for publicity, Lincoln was reticent to a fault about the traumas of his youth. He had conquered all that — why go back there?

Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency Moore Home State Historic Site, where Lincoln and his stepmother last saw each other.

And yet, he did go back there, this one time. Charleston was a typical community in 1861, split like many others between pro- and anti-slavery families (though in Illinois, it was founded by Southerners). Surprisingly, Lincoln had argued a legal case there in 1847, *Matson v. Ashmore*, defending the rights of slaveowners to have their runaway slaves returned. Three years after Lincoln's visit, in 1864, a riot broke out in Charleston when marauding Confederate sympathizers attacked half-drunk Union soldiers preparing to return to their regiment. But that night in late January, the town turned out as one to hear a son honor his mother. He told a resident, "she had been his best friend in this world and that no son could love a mother more than he loved her."

There are several versions of their final goodbye, which each probably knew would be their last. Like him, she was haunted by visions of the future. A letter written by one of her kinsmen recorded the scene, complete with grammatical inexactitudes: "She embraced him when they parted and said she would never be permitted to see him again that she felt his enemies would assassinate him. He replied no no Mama (he always called her Mama) they will not do that. Trust in the Lord and all will be well We will see each other again."

They did not, but today we can see her thanks to a single daguerreotype taken near the end of her time on earth, a striking likeness of an old lady who had a more than ordinary brush with greatness. Two years ago, it was brilliantly reinterpreted here by the artist Maira Kalman.

Four years later, after her premonition came true, another lawyer from Springfield made the pilgrimage to Coles County. William Herndon, Lincoln's former law partner, was in mourning like the rest of the country in 1865, and undertook to find everyone he could who had known Lincoln, and to record their impressions. Long before the phrase "oral history" existed, he was undertaking one of the most important efforts to recapture the past yet attempted in the United States. Nearly every story we know of the young Lincoln is traceable to these researches. Herndon found Sarah Lincoln feeble and breathing with difficulty, but by asking her simple questions about her life, he breathed new life into her.

After she died in 1869, she was buried in a black dress Lincoln gave her on this visit — as if they were both already in mourning. She then lay in an unmarked grave until 1924, when a local Lions Club erected a stone marker for her. That seems appropriate — for if Lincoln saved the Union, she saved him, and for that alone she's entitled to a decent respect. Measured by the usual yardsticks of wealth and distinction, her own life may not have made much of a dent in the historical record. But at just the right moment, she encountered a small motherless boy, and helped him to become Abraham Lincoln.



*Sources: Michael Burlingame, "Abraham Lincoln: A Life"; Emmanuel Hertz, "The Hidden Lincoln"; Charles H. Coleman, "Sarah Bush Lincoln, The Mother Who Survived Him"; Charles H. Coleman, "Abraham Lincoln and Coles County, Illinois"; Thomas J. Malone, "Stepmothered to Greatness; The Service of Dedication of the Monument Erected Above the Graves of Thomas and Sarah Bush Lincoln."*

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*Ted Widmer is director and librarian of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University. He was a speechwriter for President Bill Clinton and the editor of the Library of America's two-volume "American Speeches."*

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SARAH BUSH LINCOLN



LINCOLN'S STEPMOTHER



SARAH BUSH LINCOLN  
*Step-mother of Abraham Lincoln*

OLDROYD





MRS. SARAH BUSH LINCOLN.  
Lincoln's Beloved Stepmother.

### AN ANECDOTE OF LINCOLN

In each issue of the Week by Week from boyhood to his death. Save each copy. You will have anecdotes and illustrations that when put together will give you a very wonderful story of the life of the immortal savior of our country.

#### HOW LINCOLN INVESTED HIS FIRST \$500 FOR THE BENEFIT OF HIS STEP-MOTHER

Soon after Mr. Lincoln entered upon his profession at Springfield, he was engaged in a criminal case in which it was thought there was little chance of success. Throwing all his powers into it, he came off victorious, and promptly received for his services \$500. A legal friend calling upon him the next morning found him sitting before a table, upon which his money was spread out, counting it over and over.

"Look here, Judge," said he. "See what a heap of money I've got from the \_\_\_\_\_ case. Did you ever see anything like it? Why, I never had so much money in my life before, put it all together." Then, crossing his arms upon the table, his manner of sobering down, he added: "I have got just \$500; if it were only \$750, I would go directly and purchase a quarter section of land, and settle it upon my old step-mother."

His friend said that if the deficiency was all he needed, he would loan him the amount, taking his note, to which Mr. Lincoln instantly acceded.

His friend then said:

"Lincoln, I would not do just what you have indicated. Your step-mother is getting old, and will not probably live many years. I would settle the property upon her for her use during her lifetime, to revert to you upon her death."

With much feeling, Mr. Lincoln replied:

"I shall do no such thing. It is a poor return at best for all the good woman's devotion and fidelity to me, and there is not going to be any half-way business about it." And so saying, he gathered up his money and proceeded forthwith to carry his long-cherished purpose into execution.



# From This Woman Lincoln Received That Inspiration Which Led Him On; She Sent Him to School and "Encouraged and Urged Him to Study"

By THOMAS J. MALONE

ALL too little is known about her. Much of her life was passed in small towns and rural places on the western frontier, a life like millions of other lives in humble walks—poor, circumscribed, toilsome, handicapped, obscure. But ten years of that life were of transcendent value to her country and to the world. In those ten years she was the chief influence in developing the boy who was to be the towering figure of his age. Her days in that decade were taken up with the endless duties of housewifery in a large family, in a rude one-room house that had none of today's conveniences. She was uneducated, as the world defines education, but she had character.

She was the stepmother of Abraham Lincoln. What she thought in those months and years of drudgery; what dreams she had, if she had dreams; what visions saw, if any, we do not know. With a husband who did not share her interest and her faith, in a neighborhood that placed no stock in book learning, she somehow kept aglow for that boy the light of ambition and effort. In her mother's heart she nursed her own counsel, but we have the son's testimony of what her love and care, her trust and encouragement, meant to him.

In those ten somber years of a boyhood spent in choring, grubbing, woodchopping, corn cropping, hog butchering and fence making, at home or "hired out," she gave the young Abraham the three things he most needed—love and trust and encouragement. And in what did she encourage him? In a thinly settled land of illiterate adults, of few and poor schools, of few books and few newspapers, of mediocre aspirations, she encouraged, yes, urged him to study! Nothing else goes so far to explain the most enigmatical character in American history, to point the mainspring motivating that growth of a neglected, half-wild, uncouth rustic to the man who continues to be the marvel of each new generation.

And she was a stepmother!

The glory of her shines upon the stepmothers of today and of tomorrow in this land, in all lands. In her woman's keeping was the fate of America, perhaps even of people everywhere aspiring to be free.

She first appears in history as Sally Bush, a young woman living in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, whom Thomas Lincoln had met before his marriage to Nancy Hanks. The Bushes are reputed to have been a family somewhat superior to the general run of folk about them. Sally, a tall, light-complexioned girl of pleasing appearance and especial neatness in dress, is said to have "held her head high." She refused Thomas' suit and married, instead, one Daniel Johnston, the town jailer, who seems to have had a steady job. Right there Daniel drops out of the record, except indirectly. A few years later he dropped out of life entirely, leaving Sally Bush Johnston free to do the thing that was to give her a distinguished place among the women of all time—to become, by marrying the bereft Thomas Lincoln, the stepmother of Nancy Hanks' lonely and misunderstood son.

Abraham's mother had died in his tenth year, scarcely two years after their moving from Kentucky to Indiana. Whether of the "milk sickness" or tuberculosis, the year the family had spent in that "half-faced camp"—a wretched hut of poles, open on one side—probably had something to do with it. After thirteen months of widowhood, Thomas Lincoln left the boy, his thirteen-year-old sister, Nancy, and their cousin Dennis Hanks, in the later teens, who was living with them, and went back to Elizabethtown to try his luck again with the Widow Johnston.

Mrs. Johnston had liked "Tommy" Lincoln and she was lonely. Also, she had three children of her own to bring up. This time she said yes. There have been unpleasant stories that Lincoln made out to her that he was more prosperous in Indiana than he really was—but when does a suitor black-eye himself anyhow?

What a moving that was in December of 1819, of the Johnston possessions to the Lincoln cabin in Indiana! A four-horse wagon it took, loaded with those household stores that to the little asking, easily contented Thomas Lincoln seemed almost sinful in their grandeur and to the Lincoln children marvelous indeed—a table, chairs, that famous and much-written-about bureau, pillows and other bedding, cooking utensils, and even knives and forks.

Let credit be given where deserved, even though belated: those possessions were probably the result, at least in part, of the industry and thrift of that Daniel Johnston of unpraised memory. He had a vicarious share in the rejuvenation of the Lincoln home that ensued, an honorable part in contributing to the comfort and happiness and

inspiration which the young Abraham knew from the day of his widow's arrival.

The Thomas Lincoln house in Indiana was much like the houses Sally Bush had known him to have in and around Elizabethtown. It was the conventional one-room log cabin, without floor, door or windows. What she would have thought and said and done if her husband had brought her to the old half-faced camp, which still stood a few steps away, one does not know; but one can feel safe in believing that she would have buckled to and made the best of it. That is just what she did in the actual circumstance. If she had been led to expect better things, she did not moon over what she found. She was in what today's parlance calls "a good sport."

The Lincoln children were promptly washed, clothed and mothered—set on the road to decency



MRS. THOMAS LINCOLN (Sally Bush)

and comfort and self-respect. Little John Johnston's spare garments were put on the lanky Abe. Matilda and Sarah Johnston's wardrobe jointly contributed to bedeck—is that the word?—his sister. Thomas Lincoln was not a self-starter. Now he had the influence needed to get him started and make him go, however spasmodically, a firm but kindly "boss" who should hold him to a standard of living for which, left to himself, he had no hankering. There was a woman in the house.

This was the combined Lincoln-Johnston family in that one-room Indiana cabin: father, mother, Sarah (formerly Nancy) Lincoln, Abraham, their cousin Dennis Hanks, John D. Johnston, and his two sisters. Four years later John Hanks, another cousin, was taken in and lived with them four years.

What would follow in like case today; in many, if not most, cases in any day? Jealousies, rivalries, neglect, favoritism, abuse, wrangling, coldness, what not!

But what characterized the newly enlarged home at Little Pigeon Creek? Love and fairness and kindness and good will, a directing spirit that realized duty and accepted responsibility, that rose above the squalor and the heart-sickening conditions and shaped the meager instrument of a seemingly blind chance into a power that preserved the Union of States, freed the Negro, exalted the common man and the thoughts and purposes of common men, and gave the enduring proof of the equality of opportunity that is America.

There was a woman in the house, a house that was not divided against itself.

These are the adjectives which those who knew her best applied to her: thoughtful, energetic, sen-

sible, sprightly, talkative, handsome, industrious, neat, tidy, proud, pure, decent, kind-hearted, charitable, pious. "That pre-eminently good woman, Sally Bush," writes Lamon.

Speedily the new Mrs. Lincoln got Tom Lincoln going. In no time that indifferently capable carpenter, assisted no doubt by the boys, had put in a floor where no floor had been, hung a door and cut holes for windows, which were then covered with greased paper for panes. The Lincoln children slept in real beds, warm, comfortable, happy in the care of the new mother who took the place of the well-loved other and filled it so competently through all the succeeding years.

Abe could read—his own mother had taught him that—but he could do little beyond reading. He had had a few weeks of schooling in Kentucky; the new mother wanted him to have more. For a few months that very year, the children were sent to the nearest school, a mile and a half away, and again three years later. When seventeen, Abe went a short time to another school four and a half miles away; but the distance, and the father's conviction that his services were needed at home or among the neighbors, prevented his keeping on.

She urged him to study. Other stepmothers, doubtless, have loved their foster-children, have been kind to them, but here was specific service in the direction most needed.

His study, it will be recalled, consisted in the reading, re-reading and in great part committing to memory of every book he could lay his hands on. A few books he owned, but the rest he borrowed in the neighborhood, that often-quoted galaxy including the Bible, Aesop, "The Pilgrim's Progress," Weems' "Life of Washington," Shakespeare, Burns, and a school history of the United States. These he would read aloud to the home folks, when they would listen to him, and his mother, at least, always would.

She understood that boy, saw good stuff in him and, like all loving mothers, thought he would make something of himself, might even become a great man.

There must have been many times in those ten years of haphazard "growing up" when Abe was downhearted over his progress toward education, as he often became later.

Who but his mother was there in that house to cheer him on, strengthen his resolution, bolster his faith in himself, to "encourage and urge him to study"?

How the boy Lincoln studied, his stepmother herself has told us: how in his reading he would jot down on boards, if without paper, any matter that seemed particularly worthwhile—sometimes the full passage, sometimes only a few marks—guarding the boards until he had paper; how he would then rewrite it, repeat it, and often bring it and read it to her, seeking her opinion; how he had "a kind of scrapbook" for safekeeping of such things as especially interested him.

Her relations with her stepson were summed up in a historic interview, after his death, given to one of his biographers. She said that Abraham had never given her a cross word or look, nor refused to do anything she asked him to do, that she had never spoken crossly to him in all her life, that his mind and hers "seemed to run together."

After Mr. Lincoln left the family home in 1830, on passing his majority, he continued until his death an affectionate interest in his mother's welfare, going to see her occasionally, sending her money at times and paying her what proved to be a last visit when President-elect before going to Washington.

What would not a diary by this woman, of those ten years from 1820 to 1830, mean to an American who still seeks to understand the miracle of Abraham Lincoln? But she kept no diary; her time was taken up with more immediate and pressing occupation. No one has written her biography; the known facts of her life have seemed too few and too commonplace. Some years ago Robert Todd Lincoln, grandson of her and Thomas Lincoln, placed a modest stone over their graves in a country cemetery in Coles County, Illinois. More recently the Lions' Clubs of Illinois erected, for them both, a more pretentious marker there.

There should be a monument to her alone reared, not by relative nor by specific organization nor by government, but by all the people of the United States who hold dear the life and service of Abraham Lincoln and who would honor the memory of the noble woman whose nurturing made him what he was. And its inscription should be, without fulsome detail:

TO THE WORLD'S GREATEST  
STEPMOTHER

She Loved Abraham Lincoln,  
And She Urged Him to Study



# LIVING TODAY

Women's History Week

## *His 'angel mother'*

Each day during Women's History Week, March 5-11, a different woman from the area's past will be highlighted on these pages — Editor's note.

By KATHLEEN SECHOWSKI

Tribune Staff Writer

Abraham Lincoln was not her son by birth, but Sarah Johnson Lincoln was more than a stepmother to him. She was, he said, "my angel mother."

A tall, attractive woman, Sarah Johnson was a widow with three young children when Thomas Lincoln asked her to marry him in 1819. Fourteen months after the death of his first wife, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, Thomas went to Elizabethtown, Ky., south of Louisville, for the sole purpose of bringing Mrs. Johnson back to Indiana as his bride.

Thomas and Nancy had lived in Elizabethtown before their move to Indiana in 1816 and had known Sarah and her husband, Daniel. Sarah, or Sally as she was usually called, and Nancy had given birth to their first-born children, both daughters, at about the same time.

Sally was the daughter of a well-established property holder, one of the earliest settlers of Elizabethtown, named Christopher Bush. From all accounts, however, her husband, Daniel, who was Elizabethtown jailor at one time and died in 1816, was usually in debt.

Thomas Lincoln had to pay what debts remained before he could marry Sally and take her back to Indiana with him. That he did upon his arrival in Elizabethtown, and the next day Sarah Bush Johnson became his wife.

With a wagonload of possessions, Sally and her children traveled with Thomas to his home in Pigeon Creek, a settlement in what is now Spencer County, northeast of Ev-



SARAH BUSH LINCOLN

ansville. With their arrival the windowless, floorless and doorless cabin became home to eight persons: Abraham, then 9; his sister, Sarah, 11, and Dennis Hanks, 19, an illegitimate son of one of Nancy's aunts, in addition to Thomas, Sally and her three children.

A kindly, energetic, honest, Christian woman said to be steadier-minded and stronger-willed

than Nancy Hanks, Sally soon had Thomas making the cabin more livable. The Lincoln children immediately began to reap benefits from her care, too — in grooming, affection and education.

Though unable to write even her name, Sally Lincoln did bring several books with her from Elizabethtown. Abraham was immediately drawn to them, and Sally did all she could to encourage his learning. The winter of her arrival, Sally saw to it that Abe obtained a few more weeks of schooling under the instruction of a traveling schoolmaster.

Though he could write his own name, Thomas Lincoln had little patience for any other writing or reading; clearing the land and farming were more urgent matters. From most accounts Abraham and his father had little affection for one another, but Abraham and his stepmother were quite fond of each other. After Thomas's death in 1851, Abraham carefully guarded Sally's small inheritance from his stepbrother.

Sally is also credited with encouraging her stepson's career. She is said to have told him at one point that he "ought to go into politics because when he got to argyin' the other feller'd purty soon say he had enough."

In an interview five months after Lincoln's assassination, less than four years before her own death in 1869 at age 81, Sally confirmed the positive relationship she and Abraham had had.

"He was the best boy I ever saw. I never gave him a cross word in all my life," she was quoted as saying. "His mind and mine, what little I had, seemed to run together, to move in the same channel."



# Lincoln's Other Mother

By BERNADINE BAILEY

Author of "Abe Lincoln's Other Mother: The Story of Sarah Bush Lincoln."

IT WAS a snowy day early in 1861, when the tall, gaunt man with shoulders slightly stooped alighted from his carriage and walked up the path to the two-room log cabin. Abraham Lincoln had come from Springfield to bid his stepmother good-bye before he undertook the long trip to Washington for his inauguration. Near the cabin stood a gray-haired woman, with lines in her face that marked the years, but in whose eyes there shone a love and pride that were ageless. The tall man put his arms around her and held her close, while unbidden tears fell from her gray-blue eyes. To this "other mother," Abraham Lincoln owed much of his success.

• • •

Tom Lincoln had known her in Kentucky years before, when she was pretty young Sally Bush. Rumor has it that he had paid court to her then, but she married Daniel Johnston. This marriage led to 13 years of toil and hardship for Sally Bush, for Johnston made only a meager living.

When he was appointed jailer of Hardin county, she thought life would be somewhat easier. The little family of four moved into the living quarters on the first floor of the county jail in Elizabethtown, while the prisoners were kept in a dungeon underneath.

She soon found that her responsibilities were increased, rather than lessened, by her husband's new work. Not only must she keep the jail and courthouse clean and fill the lamps each day, but it was also her duty to prepare meals for the prisoners.

For two years the Johnstons lived in the one-room home above the dungeon. Their third child and only son was born there. Then suddenly, in the summer of 1816, the death of her husband forced Sarah Bush Johnston to remake her life once more. She was 27 years old now.

Determined that her two little girls and her baby boy should have the right kind of home, she bought from Samuel Haycraft a half interest in a small piece of land just outside Elizabethtown. For the little cabin and the one and a quarter acres that surrounded it, she paid \$25.

Sarah Johnston's life seemed destined for sudden changes. Always she met them with the courage and resourcefulness that marked her Dutch heritage and her upbringing as a pioneer woman. On Dec. 2, 1819, there came another turning point in her life, the most important one of all. On that day she married Tom Lincoln and left her home and kinfolk in Kentucky.

Sarah Bush Lincoln did not come empty-handed to her new husband's home on Little Pigeon Creek, in southern Indiana. Well made furniture, hand-made pillows and coverlets, cooking pots, and baking pans she brought with her in the large, creaky wagon. She also brought her own three children: Betsy, 12; Tilda, 8; and John, 4 years old.

Young Abe and his sister now had companions their own age to play with. Best of all, they had a mother who turned their bare, cheerless cabin into a home of modest comfort. Spurred by his wife's interest, Tom Lincoln built a floor for the cabin, made a door and proper windows.

• • •

More important than the physical comforts which the new mother provided was her insistence that young Abe should be allowed to attend school. At the age of 10, the boy could neither read nor write. Neither could Sarah Lincoln, but she sensed his eagerness for "book learning" and argued Tom Lincoln into freeing the boy from some of his farm chores so that he could walk the eight miles to the country school. This incident might well be considered the turning point in Abraham Lincoln's life.

• • •

In 1830, the Lincolns moved from Indiana to Illinois, and settled in Coles county the following year. Here, on Goose Nest Prairie, Tom Lincoln bought a farm and built a cabin, where he lived until his death in 1851. Eager to make his own way in the world, Abe moved to New Salem and then to Springfield shortly after his father settled in Coles county. But he never

forgot the woman who had brought love and encouragement into the formative years of his boyhood.

Several times Abe Lincoln made the tedious trip from Springfield to the little farm in eastern Illinois to see his parents. When things were going badly with Tom Lincoln, in 1841, Abe purchased the east 40 acres of Tom's farm for \$200 (Tom had paid only \$50 for it) and gave his father a life interest in the property.

Shortly after Tom Lincoln's death, his stepson John D. Johnston, wanted to sell the farm in Coles county, but Abe would not permit it.

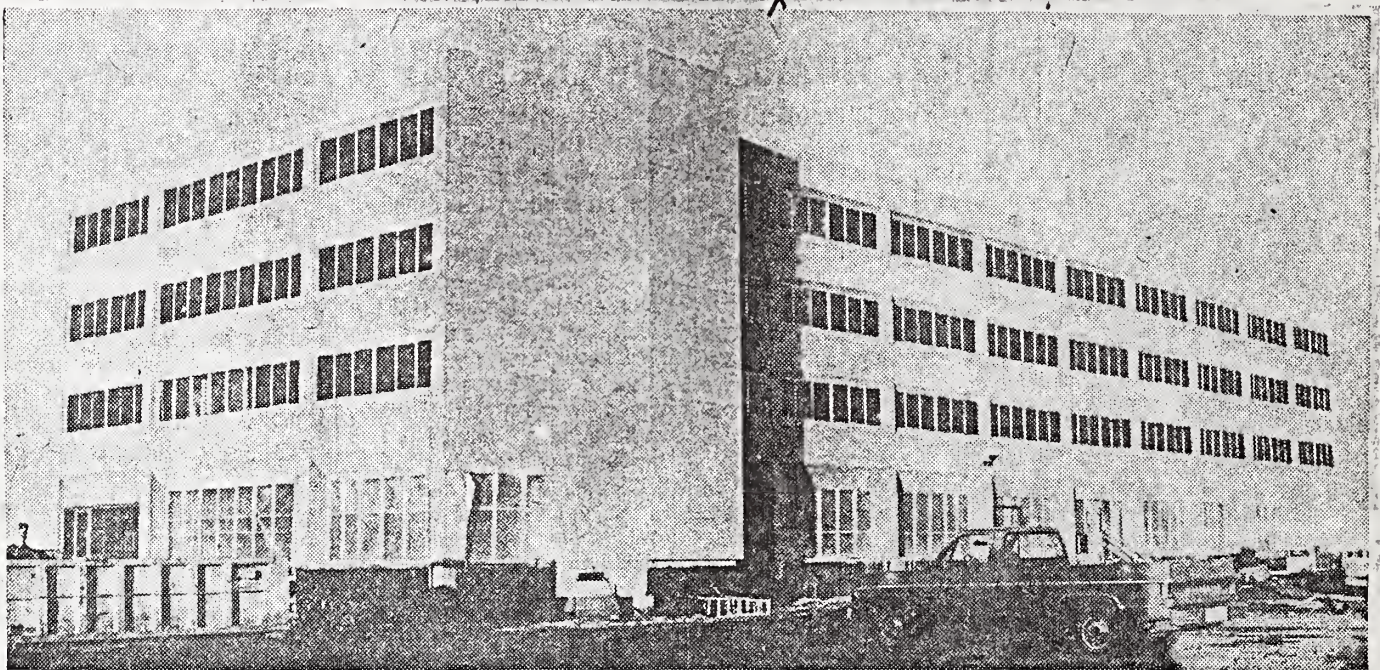
"Your proposal about selling the east 40 acres of land is all that I want or could claim for myself, but I am not satisfied with it on mother's account," Lincoln wrote. "I want her to have her living and I feel that it is my duty, to some extent, to see that she is not wronged.

"The eastern 40 I intend to keep for mother while she lives; if you will not cultivate it, it will rent for enough to support her . . . I am confident that the land can be made to produce for mother at least \$30 a year and I cannot, to oblige any living being, consent that she shall be put on an allowance of \$16 a year." Thus wrote Abe, the stepson of Sarah Lincoln, to John, her own flesh and blood. Many times, thruout his adult life, he sent money to his cousin, Dennis Hanks, and to his step-nephew, John J. Hall, for the care of his stepmother.

• • •

On this farewell visit on Jan. 31, 1861, Abe Lincoln brought his stepmother the material for a black dress. Together they visited Tom Lincoln's grave, and Abe left instructions with Isaac Rogers for it to be marked with a tombstone. Some presentment of the problems and disaster that lay ahead must have been in the great man's mind, for he said, "This is the dearest spot on earth to me, but I never expect to see it again." He never did.





*Located Between Charleston + Mattoon, Ill*

Completion of the Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center is targeted for the end of the year.

Photo by Linda Negro



ended. I ate dinner with him after he was elected President. He wrote me a letter that he was going to see his mother, came by Decatur, I went with him, saw his father's grave. He stayed with his mother once. We ate dinner at, in, Farmington. Pretty woman there that took Abe's eyes, I assure you. We then went back to Charleston and came to Springfield. I saw him in Washington when he was inaugurated, was in his rooms several times. Never saw him again till I saw his dead form in the city of Springfield.

I served in the army of the U.S.A. in 1861 and toiled those three years to preserve and defend what he loved.

I can say that this testimony can be implicitly relied on. Mr. Lincoln loved this man, thought him beautiful, honest, and noble. Lincoln has stated this to me over and over again.

HERNDON.

#### MRS. THOMAS LINCOLN'S STATEMENT

*Old Mrs. Lincoln's home, 8 miles south of Charleston,  
Friday, September 8, 1865.*

Mrs. Thomas Lincoln says:

I knew Mr. Lincoln in Kentucky. I married Mr. Johnston, he died about 1817 or '18. Mr. Lincoln came back to Kentucky, having lost his wife. We, Thomas Lincoln and myself, were married in 1819, left Kentucky, went to Indiana, moved there in a train, think Kramer moved us. Here is our old Bible dated 1819; it has Abe's name in it. Here is Barclay's Dictionary dated 1799; it has Abe's name in it, though in a better handwriting; both are boyish scrawls. When we landed in Indiana, Mr. Lincoln had erected a good log cabin, tolerably comfortable. This is the bureau I took to Indiana in 1819, cost \$45 in Kentucky. Abe was then young, so was his sister. I dressed Abe and his sister up, looked more human. Abe slept upstairs, went up on pins stuck in the logs, like a ladder; our bedsteads were original creations, none such now, made of poles and clapboards. Abe was about nine years of age when I landed in Indiana. The country was wild, and desolate. Abe was a good boy; he didn't like physical labor, was diligent for knowledge, wished to know, and if pains and labor would get it, he was sure to get it. He was the best boy I ever saw. He read all the books he could lay his hands on. I can't remember dates nor names, am about seventy-five years of age; Abe read the Bible some, though not as much as said; he sought more congenial books suitable for his age. I think newspapers were had in Indiana as early as 1824 and up to 1830 when we moved to Illinois.

Abe was a constant reader of them. I am sure of this for the years of 1827-28-29-30. The name of the Louisville *Journal* seems to sound like one. Abe read history papers and other books, can't name any one, have forgotten. Abe had no particular religion, didn't think of that question at that time, if he ever did. He never talked about it. He read diligently, studied in the daytime, didn't after night much, went to bed early, got up early, and then read, eat his breakfast, got to work in the field with the men. Abe read all the books he could lay his hands on, and when he came across a passage that struck him, he would write it down on boards if he had no paper and keep it there till he did get paper, then he would rewrite it, look at it, repeat it. He had a copybook, a kind of scrapbook, in which he put down all things and then preserved them. He ciphered on boards when he had no paper or no slate, and when the board would get too black, he would shave it off with a drawing knife and go on again. When he had paper, he put his lines down on it. His copybook is here now or was lately. (Here it was shown to me by Mrs. Thomas Lincoln.) Abe, when old folks were at our house, was a silent and attentive observer, never speaking or asking questions till they were gone, and then he must understand everything, even to the smallest thing, minutely and exactly; he would then repeat it over to himself again and again, sometimes in one form and then in another, and when it was fixed in his mind to suit him, he became easy and he never lost that fact or his understanding of it. Sometimes he seemed perturbed to give expression to his ideas and got mad, almost, at one who couldn't explain plainly what he wanted to convey. He would hear sermons [by the] preacher, come home, take the children out, get on a stump or log, and almost repeat it word for word. He made other speeches, such as interested him and the children. His father had to make him quit sometimes, as he quit his own work to speak and made the other children as well as the men quit their work. As a usual thing Mr. Lincoln never made Abe quit reading to do anything if he could avoid it. He would do it himself first. Mr. Lincoln could read a little and could scarcely write his name; hence he wanted, as he himself felt the uses and necessities of educating, his boy Abraham to learn, and he encouraged him to do it in all ways he could. Abe was a good boy, and I can say what scarcely one woman, a mother, can say in a thousand and it is this: Abe never gave me a cross word or look and never refused in fact, or even in appearance, to do anything I requested him. I never gave him a cross word in all my life. He was kind to everybody and to everything and always accommodated others if he could, would do so willingly if he could. His mind and mine, what little I had, seemed to run together, more in the same channel. Abe could easily learn and long remember, and when he did learn anything he learned it well and thoroughly.



What he thus learned he stored away in his memory, which was extremely good. What he learned and stored away was well defined in his own mind, repeated over and over again and again, till it was so defined and fixed firmly and permanently in his memory. He rose early, went to bed early, not reading much after night. Abe was a moderate eater, and I now have no remembrance of his special dish; he sat down and ate what was set before him, making no complaint; he seemed careless about this. I cooked his meals for nearly fifteen years. He always had good health, never was sick, was very careful of his person, was tolerably neat and clean only, cared nothing for clothes, so that they were clean and neat, further cut no figure with him, nor color, new stuff, nor material; was careless about these things. He was more fleshy in Indiana than ever in Illinois. I saw him every year or two. He was here after he was elected President of the United States. (Here the old lady stopped, turned around and cried, wiped her eyes, and proceeded.) As company would come to our house Abe was a silent listener, wouldn't speak, would sometimes take a book and retire aloft, go to the stable or field or woods, and read. Abe was always fond of fun, sport, wit, and jokes. He was sometimes very witty indeed. He never drank whisky or other strong drink, was temperate in all things, too much so, I thought sometimes. He never told me a lie in his life, never evaded, never quarreled, never dodged nor turned a corner to avoid any chastisement or other responsibility. He never swore or used profane language in my presence nor in others' that I now remember of. He duly revered old age, loved those best about his own age, played with those under his age; he listened to the aged, argued with his equals, but played with the children. He loved animals generally and treated them kindly; he loved children well, very well. There seemed to be nothing unusual in his love for animals or his own kind, though he treated everybody and everything kindly, humanely. Abe didn't care much for crowds of people; he chose his own company, which was always good. He was not very fond of girls, as he seemed to me. He sometimes attended church. He would repeat the sermon over again to the children. The sight of such a thing amused all and did especially tickle the children. When Abe was reading, my husband took particular care not to disturb him, would let him read on and on till Abe quit of his own accord. He was dutiful to me always; he loved me truly, I think. I had a son John who was raised with Abe. Both were good boys, but I must say, both now being dead, that Abe was the best boy I ever saw or ever expect to see. I wish I had died when my husband did. I did not want Abe to run for President, did not want him elected, was afraid somehow or other, felt it in my heart that something would happen to him, and when he came down to see me after he was elected President, I still felt that something told me that something



would befall Abe and that I should see him no more. Abe and his father are in Heaven, I have no doubt, and I want to go to them, go where they are. God bless Abraham.

When I first reached the home of Mrs. Lincoln and was introduced to her by Colonel A. H. Chapman, her grandson by marriage, I did not expect to get much out of her. She seemed so old and feeble; she asked me my name two or three times and where I lived as often, and would say: "Where Mr. Lincoln lived once, his friend too." She breathed badly at first but she seemed to be struggling at last to arouse herself, or to fix her mind on the subject. Gradually by introducing simple questions to her, about her age, marriage, Kentucky, Thomas Lincoln, her former husband, her children, grandchildren, Johnston, she awoke as it were a new being, her eyes were clear and calm; her flesh is white and pure, not coarse or material; is tall, has bluish large gray eyes; ate dinner with her, sat on my west side, left arm, ate a good hearty dinner, she did.

When I was about to leave, she arose, took me by the hand, wept, and bade me good-by, saying: "I shall never see you again, and if you see Mrs. Abraham Lincoln and family, tell them I send them my best and tenderest love. Good-by, my good son's friend, farewell."

I then went to Thomas Lincoln's grave.

[HERNDON.]

#### NAT GRIGSBY'S STATEMENT

*Gentryville, Ind., September 12, 1865.*

My name is N. Grigsby, am fifty-four years of age, knew Abraham Lincoln well. My father came from Kentucky in the fall of 1815 and settled in what is called now Spencer County, once a part and portion of Perry. Thomas Lincoln moved to this State in the year 1816 or 1817. He came in the fall of the year and crossed the Ohio River at what is called Ephraim Thompson's Ferry, about two and a half miles west of Troy. The country was a wilderness and there were no roads from Troy to the place he settled, which place is about one and a half miles east of Gentryville, the town in which I now live and you are visiting. Thomas Lincoln was a large man, say six feet or a little less, strong and muscular, not nervous. Thomas Lincoln was a man of good morals, good habits, and exceedingly good-humored, he could read and sign his name, write but little. Mrs. Lincoln, the



